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## THE CRAYON.

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## SKETCHES OF INDIA.—VI.

*"Beneath dark palm trees by the river side."*

WITH all its myriads of people, its golden-sanded rivers, its fertile plains, the luxuriance of its forests, its mountains full of secret treasures, its mines of Golconda, its gleaming jewels and gold, India is yet miserably poor. And, notwithstanding its wealth of association, the brilliancy of its romance, the interest of its history, the glory of great deeds, the splendor of its sun, the various beauty of its scenery, the number and the strangeness of the memorial records of its past, and the power which even its present condition holds over the imagination, it yet is a land full of sadness, and, underneath her gorgeous robes, one beholds India, like a fallen queen, in sorrow and in tears, while

Beneath her palm trees, by the river side,  
She sits a weeping.

Ages of war and oppression have desolated the land from the Himalayas to the Cape of the farthest south. The spirit of the people, softened by the fatal influence of an enervating climate, has been subdued by long-continued, unrelenting oppression. The tyranny of successive rulers, "greedy as the grave," has been but the counterpart of the worse tyranny of superstition, more "inexorable than death itself." It is no wonder that the mass of her people are sunk in apathy and ignorance; no wonder that many of those raised above want, and not compelled to labor for the support of a life little worth having, void of energy and ambition, pass their years in inglorious ease, or that the nobler few who contrast what their country is with what it might be, speak always of it with a tone of sadness, and regard their own lot with a mournful acquiescence.

The English rule, long little better than the misgovernments which it overthrew and succeeded, is indeed doing more and more every year for the regeneration of the country. The spirit which now animates many of the efforts of the English in India, is far different from that of the days of Clive and Hastings. The responsibilities which their power lays upon them are daily more clearly recognized and more distinctly acknowledged. The good of the people, and not the gain of the masters, is now the established principle of the Anglo-Indian government. But this good is sought and labored for by foreign hands and hearts, and the work is scarcely shared, even in least degree, by those for whose sake it is undertaken. "They say that we have no word for patriotism in our language," said a young Hindoo, with a half sneer and a melancholy smile, "perhaps it is so—but we love our country, though we cannot be proud of her."

The position of the few liberal and enlightened Hindoos, is one full of painful sadness to themselves. Raised far above the mass of their countrymen, they are, at the same time, cut off from intimate sympathy with the great majority of their social equals and near friends. Even in the midst of their families they can expect lit-

tle accordance of opinion, no community of hope and of belief. They are forced by all the strongest ties of affection, by regard to the feelings of those whom they have learned to respect and love, to bow before customs which they detest, and to yield to an authority which they despise. All worldly interests are ranged on the side of the established customs, and the firm-set institutions of society. The immediate results which follow—open opposition to the confirmed prejudices of their race—are so grievous and hard to be borne, that few are willing to venture on active resistance, and the natural result of their condition is, that, combined with the utmost freedom of speculation and but half-concealed expression of disdain, is a general conformity and submission to methods of life which at heart are utterly abhorred.

The Brahminical authority, exalted by the sacred books of the Hindoos as in its nature divine, is now, indeed, very much broken. The relations between the Brahmins and the other castes, have lost much of their ancient character. The "twice born" is no longer elevated by his hereditary sanctity above the Loodra, or "servile" caste. Many a rich Loodra has Brahmins for his servants; and the intermingling of preposterous pretensions to sanctity with the performance of menial services, leads to curious and perplexing confusions. But, notwithstanding the present fallen condition of the Brahmins as a caste, still the individual authority of many of them remains very great, and priestly influence still exercises an oppressive and unnatural control. The commonest affairs of every day life, eating, drinking, bathing, all the concerns of business and pleasure, are regulated by the sacred books, and receive the character of religious ordinances. The most childish absurdities are practised under the sanction of religion, and their performance is regarded as of the last importance. The chief hindrances to the spread of enlightenment are found in these perversions of religion. The worst features of Hindoo society have derived their character, and infamous sanctity, from superstition. Widow burning and child murder have been regarded as divinely ordained. The natural feelings, the common sympathies of mankind, have been crushed out of existence by the weight of false doctrines. And, even now, the light which breaks in upon Hindooism from every side, but serves to show the breadth and completeness of the desolation which has been effected in the name, and with the authority, of religion.

One of the worst evils of Hindoo society at the present day, is the low condition of women. To educate them is contrary to the sacred books, and they grow up from childhood utterly ignorant, without aim or object in life, shut out from the world in their closed apartments, the playthings and the servants, but not the companions of their husbands. All that is sacred and happy in domestic life is unknown. The refining and elevating influence of woman's character is little felt, little even imagined in the East. The poets have praised her

only as a beautiful toy, the object of an hour's love, not of a life-long devotion. They have sung the flashing glances of her dark, deep, lustrous eyes, the melody of her voice, the music of her gait, the softness of her bosom, the sweetness of her lips—they have crowned her queen of earthly joys, and they have made Paradise earthly for her sake. But the love which ennobles and strengthens, the sentiment which purifies the heart, the loyalty to an ideal image of beauty, the faith in the loveliness of the soul of which the outward beauty is only the type—these belong to colder climates, and less entrancing lands. The sanctity of marriage, and the dignity of woman, are known only where Christianity spreads its benign light.

From the consideration of these evils that afflict the present condition of Hindoo society, evils the nature of which is such as to imply the existence of a thousand others connected with them and following from them, it may be conceived in what a position of solitude, barrenness and restraint a Hindoo, enlightened beyond the rest of his people, finds himself in the world. Without sympathy in the world or at home, without power to effect the good which he sees and desires, tormented by vain doubts, restless, compelled to conformity for the sake of peace, not possessing the spirit of martyrdom, and unwilling to venture much where it seems possible to gain so little, it is well if he does not sink by degrees into apathetic listlessness, occupying himself with the cares or the frivolities of the day, and leaving the great concerns of the world to other and less encumbered hands. The education which he has gained, has been such as to overthrow his faith in prescriptive errors, but not such as to supply him with the grounds of higher and more stable belief; it has been enough to encourage discontent, but not enough to lead the way from discontent to peace. Very few of the Hindoos who have thrown off the prevailing errors of belief, have embraced the truths of Christianity. The fact is a striking one, and the reasons for it are not difficult to discern; but this is perhaps hardly the place for entering upon them. He is left alone, with no human help to animate him, and no sense of the presence of God to support him in his solitude.

It might be expected that such men as this, of whom, indeed, there are very few, would find some friends and appreciative encouragement among the English in India. But here, again, other obstacles interpose. The most lamentable fact connected with the English rule in India, is the want of proper social relations between the Anglo-Indians and the native Hindoos. The great sin of the English in the East, is their want of sympathy and due regard for the feelings of their subjects in their daily intercourse with them. They preserve in social relations the position of superiors, of conquerors. Many a brutal Englishman, who considers himself a gentleman, and who holds what as he esteems a position above reproach, classes the whole race of Hindoos under the comprehensive head of

"damned niggers," and considers them and their feelings as of no importance, except so far as he makes them of service to himself. The tone in English society in India toward the natives is generally, not universally, that of undisguised contempt. No distinction is made between the native gentleman and the native rascal, and no native with a sense of his own dignity, or with proper self-respect, will seek intercourse with those by whom he is regarded and treated, not as an equal, but an inferior. Solitude is, therefore, forced upon him on this side as on all others.

The picture I have drawn of the position of a man raised by education and character above the general level of the community, is not an exaggerated one. In a letter written to me by one of this class, he thus speaks of himself:

"You can hardly conceive our pitiable condition, I mean of those like myself, who have had the good fortune (I should more properly say from the circumstantial embarrassment, *ill-fortune*), of having been brought up differently from their predecessors, as to think in many instances so diametrically dissimilar to the notions considered orthodox in this country. Their minds are constantly perturbed, and in a state of feverish commotion quite indescribable. Our position is quite miserable, awful to think of, and can only be felt by actual situation, in which I never wish anybody, much less my friends, to be placed for trial. But as no innovation can be effected without suffering the direful consequences of excommunication, and the concomitant pains inseparable therefrom, we are impelled from feelings of affection, and ties of friendship, to adhere apparently to vile custom. To entertain and give expression to any notion different from the preconceived and prevailing opinion of the community in any matter whatsoever, is deemed heretical, and the Hindus cannot tolerate heresy. Any one imbibing such opinion, is made to separate himself from everybody most dear and near to him. But I am happy, most happy, inexpressibly so, in being able to say, that as our number is daily increasing, the Hindoos of the old school are becoming more and more tolerant; not, however, from any conviction of the absurdity of their views, but because they have no help, and cannot restrain the current of improved thoughts. I wish our rising generation will be more happy in having to think of less opposition. I dare say the third generation from the present will find no obstacles in their way, since the inveterate opponents to reformation will all die away, and make room for others with more refined feelings and ideas. For myself, as now situated, I wish I could persuade my mind to think as a fatalist, for in that case I might have consoled myself with the thought that we were destined to be so situated, and that there was no need of fretting about those things that now perturb our minds."

This passage seems to me to describe a state of feeling as natural as it is pathetic. But the very existence of such character as is shown in it, and the very fact of the sadness of their condition being felt so deeply by such men, while awakening sympathy for them, gives the promise of better things to come. The trials of the present turn into strength and gladness for the future,

and the seed that is sown with tears shall be reaped as a harvest of golden grain.

It is not only the restlessness of the native mind, under the restraints that have so long been imposed upon it, that affords good ground for hope that India has entered upon a course of improvement and regeneration. Efforts are being made on all sides by the English to introduce new elements of progress. A system of education is being spread over the land, beginning with the general establishment of elementary schools for all classes, and ending with the foundation of colleges for those able to pursue the higher branches of learning. The internal resources of the country are being developed. Roads rivaling those of Roman times now bind the great cities together. Canals which take their place among the noblest works of modern beneficence, draw off the waters of useless rivers to fertilize vast tracts of land, and to secure their inhabitants from the famine, that before their construction was the certain attendant of long-continued drought. Whole tribes have been reclaimed from the habits of lawless and predatory life to the content and peace of prosperous agricultural communities. Railroads are stretching inland from both coasts, bringing far distant towns close together, and levelling the old differences of race and caste. The telegraph reaches out its arms from city to city, and messages travel in an instant from one end of the land to the other. Every advance that civilization makes in the West is a gain for the civilization of the East.

Nor is it alone in these great conspicuous ways that progress is to be noted. The whole scheme of government is slowly being adapted to the special demands made upon it, and is receiving those modifications which experience shows to be needed. There are hints, too, of an improvement in the social relations of the governors and the governed. The barrier which has excluded natives from any but subordinate positions in public offices, has been broken down. A Hindoo physician, Dr. Chuckerbutty, has been enrolled in the regular medical service of the East India Company, and almost the last mail from India brings the news of the appointment of Prono Conomart Tagore, a son of the distinguished Dwarkanath Tagore, to a seat on the bench of the Sudder Adawlut, or Supreme Court of Bengal, at Calcutta, thus placing him in the highest judicial position in India. That a Hindoo should be made a judge over Englishmen, shows at once that an essential change in the policy of the government has commenced, and sets a stamp of certainty on the fact, that Eastern color and birth are not to interfere with the actual equality of the two races. By such a course as this, a thousand invidious social distinctions will be swept away, and the terms of intercourse between native and English gentlemen will soon be regulated by the same laws that prevail in a community where differences of race do not exist to create distinctions that have no foundation in character.

And there is still another and a more solid ground of hope in the gradual spread of Christianity by direct efforts, and by indirect influences. It is from this, indeed, that all the other sources of progress take their rise. It is to the effect of the spirit of Christianity, to the power of Christian

principles, more or less fully recognized, that the means of improvement now in course of development are mainly due, and it is by this spirit and this power that what remains to be done will finally be effectually accomplished.

Will be accomplished; but when? It seems, indeed, in looking at the vast extent and overwhelming weight of the evils to be encountered and overthrown, and at the smallness of the force engaged against them, as if the time when they shall be subdued were so distant as to be almost beyond the reach of the forward-looking eye of faith. Progress is always slow, and against such obstacles is made with irregular and faltering steps. But with every step fresh strength is gained. The work of regeneration has begun, and it will go on till at length the time shall come, when her children free, enlightened, and united not merely by the loose ties of blood and birth, but by the closer bonds of a common faith, India shall no longer sit weeping

"Beneath dark palm-trees by the river's side."

#### IMITATION OF NATURAL MATERIALS.

AND, therefore, in finally leaving the Ducal Palace, let us take with us one more lesson, the last which we shall receive from the Stones of Venice, except in the form of a warning.

The school of architecture (The Early Renaissance) which we have just been examining, is, as we have seen, redeemed from severe condemnation, by its careful and noble use of inlaid marbles as a means of color. From that time forward this art has been unknown, or despised; the frescoes of the swift and daring Venetian painters long contended with the inlaid marbles, outvying them with color, indeed more glorious than theirs, but fugitive as the hues of wood in autumn; and, at last, as the art itself of painting in this mighty manner failed from among men, the modern decorative system established itself, which united the meaninglessness of the veined marble with the evanescence of the fresco, and completed the harmony by falsehood.

Since first, in the second chapter of the "Seven Lamps," I endeavored to show the culpableness, as well as the baseness, of our common modes of decoration by painted imitation of various woods or marbles, the subject has been discussed in various architectural works, and is evidently becoming one of daily increasing interest. When it is considered how many persons there are whose means of livelihood consist altogether in these spurious arts, and how difficult it is, even for the most candid, to admit a conviction contrary both to their interests and to their inveterate habits of practice and thought, it is rather a matter of wonder, that the cause of Truth should have found even a few maintainers, than that it should have encountered a host of adversaries. It has, however, been defended repeatedly by architects themselves, and so successfully, that I believe, so far as the desirableness of this or that method of ornamentation is to be measured by the fact of its simple honesty or dishonesty, there is little need to add anything to what has been already urged upon the subject. But there are some points